

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives more accurate and authoritative information on national affairs affecting labor in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and also the international situation, than any other news service.

# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WILLIAM GREEN, President

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FRANK MURPHY, Secretary-Treasurer

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## Preservation of Democracy in Organized Labor Is Only Issue In Controversy of A. F. of L. With C. I. O., Green Declares

The American Federation of Labor Is Based on Democratic Procedure and Majority Rule, Under Laws Made by Conventions of Union Delegates, He Asserts; But in the C. I. O., "We Find a Self-Appointed, Self-Constituted, Self-Perpetuating Committee Ruling the Affairs of the Organization by Absolute Dictatorship; the Membership Never Has Been Consulted About Any Policy; the Union Members Who Contribute Part of Their Wages to Finance the Organization Never Have Been Given Any Sort of Accounting for the Expenditure of Their Funds."

"This Committee, Itself, Is a Fraud; In Reality the C. I. O. Is Governed By One Man—John L. Lewis; He Does With the C. I. O. as He Alone Pleases, He Spends C. I. O. Funds as He Alone Pleases, He Decides C. I. O. Policies as He Alone Pleases—All Without the Slightest Vestige of Responsibility to Anyone But Himself."

The A. F. of L.-C. I. O. Peace Conference Reached an Agreement, But It Was Vetoed by Lewis; "Then It Is An Inescapable Conclusion That the United Desire For Peace in the Divided Ranks of Labor Is Being Balked by One Man; He Is the Dictator of the C. I. O.; He Is The Would-Be Dictator Over All of Organized Labor."

"This One Man Flouted the Principles of Democracy When He Formed The C. I. O.; He Disdained the Principles of Democracy in Running The C. I. O., and He Threatens the Future of Democracy by Maintaining the C. I. O."

By A. F. of L. Weekly News Service.

Editor's Note: In its March 9, 1933, issue the Washington (D. C.) Daily News published a statement by William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, with the heading "Democracy Sole Issue in Feud—Green." In an explanatory note the News said: "Recently the News and other Scripps-Howard newspapers published two series of labor articles—'Inside the C. I. O.' by Benjamin Stolberg, and 'Inside the A. F. of L.' by Herbert Little. At the conclusion of the Stolberg articles, John L. Lewis was invited to make a statement regarding the C. I. O.'s position. Lewis did not accept our invitation. At the conclusion of the Little articles, William Green was invited to make a statement regarding the A. F. of L.'s position. Green accepted. His statement follows." By courtesy of the Washington Daily News the American Federation of Labor Weekly News Service republishes Mr. Green's statement.

By WILLIAM GREEN  
President, American Federation of Labor

In the world epidemic of hate and despotism our country today is striving to save peace and democracy. We fear that the red and black plaques of oppression, which have stricken so many other nations, may be transmitted to us.

A few years ago we were inclined to scoff at such fears. We felt "It can't happen here." But we are beginning to realize that official justice, communal tolerance, our individual liberty—things we took for granted yet based our whole lives upon—now may be swept from under us. And we are beginning to understand that the first field in which the sowers of hate already have begun to plant the seeds of class warfare in this country is labor.

The American Federation of Labor is determined that it must not happen here.

In the fight to maintain democracy in American labor, the American Federation of Labor stands in the same position as does the United States in the world struggle for the same cause in government. The four million members of the A. F. of L.—hard-working, decent, loyal American citizens—stand arrayed together as the shock troops against the perverters of labor, the enemies of freedom.

### RECALLS BATTLES

During the past two years much has been written about labor's hopes and trials, its past and future. Dramatic material was provided in the succession of the unions fought with the C. I. O. Many well-meaning liberals and enthusiasts, attracted by the sensationalism of C. I. O. tactics, blinded by spectacular promises, deluded by empty claims, poured into print abuse of the A. F. of L. and praise of the C. I. O. Time has rectified and will cure most of

these false impressions. And we are indebted to the Scripps-Howard newspapers, to the sense of fairness of their editors, for this opportunity to relate a few facts.

First, let us emphasize that the sole issue between the American Federation of Labor and the Committee for Industrial Organization is democracy.

Refusal of a minority group in the A. F. of L. to abide by the organization's democratic processes and by the will of the majority brought about the formation of the C. I. O. and the present division in labor in the first instance. The leaders of the C. I. O. have shown since by their works what contempt they have for democracy.

### PATTERNED AFTER J. S.

A word here about the structure of the American Federation of Labor. It is closely patterned after that of the United States Government. The national and international unions are the states. They banded together 57 years ago in a federation to which they granted certain powers, reserving the rest to themselves. Only in this way could central dictatorship be avoided and local democratic control over union affairs preserved.

The national and international unions elect delegates to the federation's annual conventions. The votes of these delegates are based upon the numerical strength of the unions. The ratio is one convention vote for each 100 union members. The conventions make all the federation's laws and elect all its officers by majority vote. At any convention the federation's constitution can be changed by two-thirds vote.

If this system of government should prove inadequate or ineffective, it would be the fault of the union members, just as it would be the fault of the citizens of the United States.

States if their Government broke down. To indict this system would be to indict democracy itself. Those who say the governmental structure of the A. F. of L. is out of date are saying democracy is out of date.

### HOW C. I. O. OPERATES

Now let us see how the C. I. O. is governed. There we find a self-appointed, self-constituted, self-perpetuating committee ruling the affairs of the organization by absolute dictatorship. The membership never has been consulted about any policy. The union members who contribute part of their wages to finance the organization never have been given any sort of accounting for the expenditure of their funds.

This committee, itself, is a fraud. In reality the C. I. O. is governed by one man—John L. Lewis. He does with the C. I. O. as he alone pleases, he spends C. I. O. funds as he alone pleases—all without the slightest vestige of responsibility to anyone but himself. For example, an outstanding C. I. O. leader as David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers, has protested against such a condition of affairs.

As a further example of the peculiar form of C. I. O. government, let us take the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. It held its first "convention" in Pittsburgh a few months ago. The delegates did not elect officers because under the S. W. O. C. agreement with the C. I. O. these officers must be appointed by Lewis. Philip Murray, chairman of the S. W. O. C., promised the delegates a financial report. They got one. It did not state how much money has been expended by the union, nor how much it had been spent. It merely gave percentages of expenditures for various purposes.

Is this democracy?

### FALSE ISSUE

But, the C. I. O. sympathizers assert, the basic issue between the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. is industrial unionism. That is a false issue. The American Federation of Labor is not opposed to industrial unionism. It recognizes that the industrial form of unionism is best suited for certain mass-production industries. It has chartered many industrial unions. At the same time, the A. F. of L. recognizes that certain industries are best suited to craft unionism. It is simply a question of applying the rule of reason.

Let us explore only briefly the recent history of this so-called issue. The 1933 convention of the A. F. of L. authorized a committee to draw up a compromise agreement on a policy satisfactory to both industrialist and craft unionists. The committee, on which Mr. Lewis and his group were amply represented, submitted a unanimous report to the convention. The report was adopted by the convention.

The Lewis group urged the 1935 convention to adopt a more extreme policy. The suggestion was "banned" by the 1935 convention by more than a two-thirds vote. Instead of accepting this verdict and continuing the fight within the federation in the hope of winning over a majority to their side, the Lewis group bolted and seceded. Was that democracy?

### POINTS TO STRIKE

Another oft-repeated charge is that the American Federation of Labor failed to organize the unorganized. The C. I. O. announced it would set out to do so. Conditions for an organizing drive were highly favorable. The Supreme Court had just upheld the constitutionality of the National Labor Relations Act, freeing the workers from the fear of being discharged if they joined a union.

What happened? The C. I. O. did not seem to care for the benefits of joining a union, nor did it seek to convince employers of the benefits of dealing with organized labor. Instead, the C. I. O. sought to organize by industrial unionism. It formed a wave of wildcat strikes. It flouted contracts. It harassed industry. It antagonized the public. It permitted troublemakers to gain positions of control over some of its unions.

The Communist Party became the champion of the C. I. O. In "little steel" the C. I. O. presumed to call a strike without first organizing the workers and without even calling a strike vote. The disastrous collapse of that strike was a lesson in the C. I. O.'s lack of leadership for many years and has impoverished us workers in the industry.

The net result is that the C. I. O. made some members

ship gains but could not hold them. When the industrial recession set in, its new membership disintegrated. Its new unions were loosely organized and not self-supporting.

### CHARGES RAIDS

In desperation the C. I. O. started to raid established A. F. of L. unions to gain membership. That's all the C. I. O. is doing now. And its activities in this respect have become so flagrant that certain C. I. O. leaders themselves, including Mr. Dubinsky, have pleaded with Mr. Lewis to cease, lest the possibility of restoring peace in labor be irreparably damaged.

What was the American Federation of Labor doing during this period? It marshaled a large force of organizers and went to work in an orderly, disciplined way. It gained more than a million members and still has them. It did not resort to sit-down strikes or other illegal methods. It respected contracts. It entrenched itself in the confidence of the workers, the employers and the public.

The total membership of the A. F. of L. now is close to four million. This figure is not an empty claim. It is based on the per capita tax receipts from each union of 100 cents per month for each member, which finance the federation. The federation's financial reports are made public annually.

### QUESTIONS C. I. O. CLAIM

It seems the C. I. O. claims four million members. Some newspaper writers recently have scaled that figure down to three million. The reason is simple. They made public any report on its dues-paid membership. There is no proof of it in any record available to the public. Mr. Dubinsky, of the C. I. O., estimates its membership at about two million. He says his new unions represent only about 25 per cent of the C. I. O.'s present membership.

It must be evident by now to any impartial observer that the C. I. O.'s vainglorious boasts must be largely discounted and that it has practically abandoned its efforts to organize the unorganized.

The pity of it is that had labor's ranks remained united, the gains of the past two years could have been trebled without upsetting industrial recovery.

We come, finally, to the all-important question of labor peace in which the American people have so vital a stake.

### WANT PEACE

The American Federation of Labor wants peace. It did everything possible, short of submitting to minority rule, to avert war. When the C. I. O. unions seceded, the A. F. of L. humbly itself and begged them to come back. For two years the federation held out a standing offer to negotiate a settlement.

This offer was spurned by the C. I. O. until last October when the rapid dissolution of their membership forced the hand of the C. I. O. leaders. A peace conference was then arranged.

After prolonged negotiations, the conferees representing both sides reached an agreement. It was acceptable to the A. F. of L. representatives and to the C. I. O. representatives. A few hours before the public announcement of peace was scheduled, Mr. Lewis, who was not a member of the C. I. O. committee, vetoed the agreement so far as the C. I. O. was concerned.

This statement is not a mere assertion by the American Federation of Labor. It has been confirmed by David Dubinsky, a member of the C. I. O. peace committee. It has been confirmed by Max Zaritsky, president of another C. I. O. union.

### SERIOUS IN EFFORT

No one who listened to the cheers of the delegates at the last A. F. of L. convention when it was announced that a peace conference had been arranged could doubt that the members of the American Federation of Labor want peace. The members of the C. I. O. have no forum, but their equal anxiety for peace is unquestioned. Then it is an inescapable conclusion that the united desire for peace in the divided ranks of labor is being balked by one man. He is the dictator of the C. I. O. He is the would-be dictator over all of organized labor. His recent political activities indicate he ultimately seeks an even broader domain.

This one man flouted the principles of democracy when he formed the C. I. O., he disdained the principles of democracy in running the C. I. O., and he threatens the future of democracy in organized labor.

## AID PLEDGED BY A. F. OF L. FOR FEDERAL WAGE-HOUR LEGISLATION

Green Urges With Roosevelt In Joining Passage of Measure During This Session of Congress.

By A. F. of L. Weekly News Service.

Washington, D. C.—William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, announced after a conference at the White House that the Federation would work with President Roosevelt for the enactment of a bill at this session of Congress setting up minimum wages and maximum

hours for employees in unskilled and oppressed industries. Mr. Green was accompanied to the White House by John P. Fry, president of the A. F. of L. Metal Trades Department, Joseph McGraw, president of the Building and Construction Trades Department, and R. M. Jewell, president of the Railway Employees Department.

As spokesman of the A. F. of L., Mr. Green said they had been invited to discuss wage and hour legislation and that the President and himself agreed in desiring

legislation before this session of Congress adjourns.

Mr. Green did not, however, arrive at any definite conclusion upon any particular phase of the proposed legislation, he stated.

The A. F. of L. executive declared that the Federation felt that the "ceiling" for hours should be definitely fixed at 40 hours a week, and that the minimum wage should be set at a minimum of 40 cents an hour, with some change in the minimum wage in order to bring it up to 40 cents an hour.

He stated that he did not think

there is a great deal of difference over how the law should be administered.

President of A. F. of L. Bill

The American Federation of Labor Wage and Hour Bill introduced in the House of Representatives by Representative Michael J. Walsh of Pennsylvania provides a flat maximum for wages at 40 cents an hour and a maximum work week of 40 hours in the industrial field. The bill is being introduced by the proposed legislation. These provisions are contained in the bill.

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## CALIFORNIA COURT HIT FOR MONEY FRAME-UP

Brief Filed With U. S. Supreme Court Asking Conviction Reverse Charge Perjury in San Francisco Trial.

By A. F. of L. Weekly News Service.

Washington, D. C.—The money frame-up in the case of the late President of the United States, Mr. William McKinley, is being brought to the attention of the Supreme Court by a brief filed with the court by the American Federation of Labor. The brief asks the court to reverse the conviction of the late President of the United States, Mr. William McKinley, for perjury in the San Francisco trial.

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## MULLANEY CELEBRATES GOLDEN JUBILEE AS ASBESTOS WORKER

Home Laid in New York City President, International Union of Asbestos Workers.

By A. F. of L. Weekly News Service.

New York, N. Y.—On March 12, 1933, on the golden anniversary of the day when Joseph A. Mullane, president of the International Union of Asbestos Workers, was elected president of the union, the union celebrated its golden jubilee.

Mr. Mullane, who was elected president of the union in 1923 and re-elected in 1927 and 1931, was elected president of the union in 1933.

During this half century Mr. Mullane has been a prominent figure in the asbestos industry. He has been a leader in the fight for better wages and conditions for asbestos workers. He has been a leader in the fight for the recognition of the union by the employers.

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